

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the Sabha.

Insurgent Activities in North Eastern Area

315. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the ISI Pakistan is suspected to have a base in Bangladesh to continue its insurgent activities in the north-eastern area of the country; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to discuss the matter with Bangladesh to ensure that its territory is not used by forces hostile to India ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) and (b) The Government is aware of anti-India activities including support to Indian insurgents in our North-Eastern States, by Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence inside Bangladesh. Our concerns at such activities are taken up on a regular basis with the Government of Bangladesh. The matter has been discussed at high levels during the visit of External Affairs Minister to Dhaka from September 6-9, 1996 and during the visit of Prime Minister to Dhaka from January 6-7, 1997. Both sides have agreed to work together to counter terrorism and insurgency activities and stated that they would not permit their territories to be used for any activity targeted against the other. The Bangladesh Prime Minister has referred to the commitment and determination of Bangladesh and India as friendliest neighbouring countries to eliminate any kind of terrorism or insurgency that may affect our respective national interest. There has been further interaction to ensure that Bangladesh territory is not used by forces hostile to India through reactivation of the Joint Working Group of the two countries.

National Waterways in Kerala

316. SHRI A. SAMPATH : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are any obstructions from any quarters regarding the development of National Waterways;

(b) the present position of the National Waterways in Kerala State; and

(c) the potential of revenue that can be earned from passenger and goods traffic per annum from the waterways of Kerala ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Kollam to Kottapuram stretch of West Coast Canal alongwith Udyogmandal and Champakara canals in Kerala

having a total length of approximately 205 kms. is a National Waterway. Champakara Canal, Udyogmandal Canal and Kochi-Edapallikota sections of West Coast Canal are presently being used for navigation by mechanised cargo vessels. Dredging works, repair and modification of locks, day navigational aids, hydrographic surveys are being carried out in this waterway regularly by IWAI. Schemes for land acquisition and capital dredging for widening of narrow stretches of the canals have been prepared.

(c) Techno-Economic studies conducted have indicated that the national waterway when developed can provide an alternate mode with substantial reduction in cost of transportation for passenger as well as goods. Revenue will accrue on account of Cargo/passenger services when the waterway establishes itself over a period of time. Traffic would depend on several factors including the growth of the IWT mode. No assessment of the revenue has been made in the Techno-Economic Studies.

[Translation]

Primary Health Centre in U.P.

317. SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been acute shortage of doctors/pharmacutists in primary health centres of Uttaranchal region in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether very small quantity of medicines is being supplied to these health centres;

(c) the names of areas where the aforesaid posts are lying vacant and the quantum of medicines being supplied to each of the Primary Health Centre;

(d) whether Government propose to fill up these vacant posts and to increase the quantum of medicines to be supplied to these centres; and

(e) if so, the action being taken in that regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) to (c) As this is a State Subject the Central Government does not maintain region-wise details. However, as per information available from State Govt. as on 30.6.96 details of vacancy position of doctors and pharmacists in the State of Uttar Pradesh is given in the attached Statement.

The Primary Health Centres are established and maintained by the State Governments under the Minimum Needs Programme. The medicines are supplied to the Primary Health Centres by the State Government through their own budget. The posting of medical and para-medical staff and supply of medicines comes under the purview of the State Governments.

(d) and (e) The Central Government has been advising the State Governments to fill up the vacancies of doctors and also ensure the adequate supply of drugs from time to time.

Statement

Vacancy position of Doctors/Pharmacists in Uttar Pradesh as on 30th June, 1996

	Sanctioned	In-position	Vacant
Doctors	3787	2263	*1524
Pharmacists	927	927	Nil

Free Medical Treatment

318. SHRI BUDHSEN PATEL : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have instructed the hospitals to follow certain rules at the time of issuing financial aid to them;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have also laid down a condition of providing free treatment to 40 percent poor people;

(d) if so, the name of the agency entrusted with conducting an enquiry into the non-compliance of the terms and conditions set in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) and (b) A condition of providing free treatment to poor and needy was being imposed by Foreign Investment Promotion Board while issuing the letter of approval in cases of proposal of setting up hospitals by NRI.

(c) to (e) The Directorate General of Health Services had been issuing custom duty exemption certificates for import of hospital equipments in terms of Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue)'s Notification No. 64/88-Cus., dated 1.3.88, provided the applicant institutions fulfill the conditions stipulated therein. While considering the case for issue of CDEC, it is assured from the State Government concerned that the hospital provides free treatment, on an average, to atleast 40% of all their out door patients as one of the conditions of the notification.

The notification No. 64/88-Cus., dated 1.3.88 has since been rescinded from 1.3.94. And also the entire matter of issuance of custom duty exemption certificate from 1988 onwards for private hospitals under Department of Revenue notification No. 64/88-Cus., dated 1.3.88 has been questioned in a Writ Petition No. 409/96 filed before Hon'ble

High Court of Delhi. After hearing the matter the Hon'ble Court in their interim order directed that two committees are to be formed to enquire into irregularities, malpractices etc. in import of hospital equipments. Accordingly the Ministry of Finance has constituted two committees vide their order No. 241 of 1996 vide their letter No. A. 11013/7/96-Ad.I, dated 1.11.96. Thus the entire matter is being examined by these two committees as per the terms of reference.

Cornea Implantation

319. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY :
SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) the number of blind persons in the country at present, State-wise;

(b) whether blindness caused due to accident or illness can be cured by cornea implantation;

(c) whether people show unwillingness to donate cornea in our country; and

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to launch a campaign for encouraging people towards donating cornea ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) On the basis of a survey conducted in 1989, it is estimated that there are more than 12 million blind persons in the country and the State-wise details of estimated No. of blind persons is given in the attached Statement.

(b) Corneal transplantation can be useful in some cases of blindness due to accident or illness.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) A fortnight is celebrated every year between 28th August to 8th September to promote eye donation.

Statement

Statewise Prevalence of Blindness and Estimated blind persons

S. No.	State/UTs	Population (1991)	Prevalence* /10000 POP.	Estimated ** Blind Persons
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	66508008	150	10,88,000
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	864558	123	13,500
3.	Assam	22414322	134	3,00,000
4.	Bihar	86374465	128	10,66,000
5.	Delhi	9420644	63	52,000